The Middlebury Campus

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DAVIS LIBRARY LEFT UNDERSTAFFED AFTER FOUR LIBRARIANS DEPART

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Local Editor

Four of Davis Family Library's librarians have left their jobs in the past four months, leaving the following vacancies in the User Experience Librarian, Science and Data Librarian, Head of Collection Development and Head of Research and Instruction positions. A new User Experience Librarian will start this month to partially relieve the intensified workload of the remaining five librarians, who are struggling to maintain their usual responsibilities in the wake of the understaffing.

The sudden staffing turnover is new for Davis this spring. According to Director of Discovery & Access Services Terry Simpkins, three of the four vacancies are partially due to discontent with Middlebury's new staff compensation system implemented by Human Resources in July 2022. The system, also known as the "skill matrix," has supervisors assess their employees and allocate additional pay based on their determined pay grade level. Simpkins mentioned that family issues and pursuit of a career change also led his former colleagues to seek work elsewhere.

Film & Media Librarian Amy Fraizer said that despite the library's efforts to prioritize student-facing tasks, they were forced to cut back research desk hours for the spring semester due to the lack of staff. Their previous 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Wednesday hours have been cut to 1–5 p.m., and to 1–4 p.m. on Thursdays. Evening hours have been eliminated completely but will resume to assist with finals from April 24–May 23 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 7–9 p.m.

"As we have continued to lose people, we just don't have enough people to cover these shifts anymore," Frazier said. "That was a painful decision to make because that's one of those student contact functions that we serve. You know it's getting serious when that stuff starts to go."

Brenda Ellis, senior research and instruction librarian, specified that no classes or students seeking individual meetings to talk about their research have been turned away due to understaffing, "but getting help may not be as timely or may not be with a librarian that specializes in the particular major," Ellis wrote in an email to The Campus.

Frazier's greater concern is for

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ABIGAIL CHANG/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

A staffing shortage at Davis Family Library has impacted research desk hours and workloads for remaining staff this spring.

Middlebury student, volunteer firefighter sets new world record

COURTESY OF IMAN BEHBEHANI

Emily Jones '23.5 ran an eight minute and 25 second mile in her 60-pound firefighting suit.

By RYAN MCELROY
News Editor

Emily Jones '23.5 was surrounded by over 100 of her fellow firefighters, friends and Middlebury students as she broke the Guinness World Record for fastest mile run by a woman wearing full firefighter turnout gear — including a respirator — on Saturday, April 8. At eight minutes and 25 seconds, Jones successfully completed the mile almost three minutes faster than the previous record at 11:00.

"I was kind of obsessed with the Guinness Book of World Records as a kid, and I just selfishly wanted my own record for something. And so I've sort of had my eyes on different records or things for a long time," Jones said.

She was specifically inspired to attempt this challenge after reading about the men's record holder, who was also a college student. Due to her personal training and background as a volunteer firefighter with the Middlebury Fire Department, she felt confident about the possibility of setting a new record.

"I just happened to look up the women's record and saw that it was at 11 minutes flat, and I thought 'I could beat that,'" Jones said.

After learning about this record, Jones talked with some of her fellow firefighters about what it would take and got their support to make this attempt on the world record.

"I decided to talk to the chief of the department, and some other friends of mine in the department. They were all super supportive and, rightfully so, thought it was a little bit crazy. And a lot of people weren't optimistic that I could actually do it," Jones said. "But here we are!"

With the assistance of volunteer firefighter and Professor of Political Economy and International Law Jeffrey Carpenter, Jones did just one practice of running the mile while wearing all of the required equipment. This was to minimize the possible strain placed on her body by training in the full, 60 pound suit. Because of this practice and her experience wearing a weighted vest during her own runs,

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Meet the 2023–24 SGA candidates

By JONATHAN EATON
Contributing Writer

This coming Monday, April 24 is the Student Government Association (SGA) presidential election. Next year's SGA senators and president will work with the administration and advocate for the needs of the student body as well as allocate student activity funding and make appointments to student, faculty and trustee committees. This week The Campus interviewed each of the SGA candidates.

SGA Presidential Candidates

Abed Abbas '24

Jonathan Eaton: What is your Hometown?

Abed Abbas: I am a Palestinian refugee from Tripoli, Lebanon.

JE: What is your major and minor, if you have a minor?

AA: I am majoring in Neuroscience on the pre-med track, with a Global Health minor.

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for SGA president?

AA: Representing 25,000 refugee students back home and working to sustain their most basic needs showed me the transformative power of advocacy. I want to be part of the immediate, consistent and long-term change that will benefit current MiddKids and those to come. Being an SGA president will provide me with the platform I need to represent the student body and meet our demands.

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

AA: Bold action requires bold leadership. I strongly believe that our needs can be met even without the complicated bureaucracy. Many students hold the idea that SGA is unnecessary as it doesn't affect their personal experiences. I want to change that through centering efforts to address all concerns. My vision is represented by a very strong community and a formation of a Middlebury identity that is inclusive to everyone. This happens by addressing the underlying issues that are preventing our student body from connecting well. My team and I are dedicated to raise the bar of our ambition for a well-rounded community by leading initiatives that provide the change we need. To learn more about what we plan to do, go/abed/.

JE: What would you do as SGA President to improve the accessibility of food on campus at night, specifically how will you fix the Grille and Dining hall Hours?

AA: The issue with the Grille is not specific to the Grille, but a problem that Middlebury has been facing across many fronts. This prompts us to think about innovative ways to address staff shortages. I want to explore options where we can incorporate student-workers within the rules that ensure the continuity of operation at the Grille just like Crossroads and Wilson. We aim to plan active steps to reshape the way the school allocates funding to its retail services or find alternative ways to generate revenue that can fund the costs of operation to attract prospective employees. To ease the problem of late-night dining, I will bring back 10 o'clock Ross through reassembling the dining committee ad-hoc to specifically address this through a very concise focus. Having more capacity to accommodate as many students as possible by utilizing the infrastructure that already exists in the spaces surrounding the dining halls. By amplifying student voices and giving a great platform for student advocates and leaders, change will emerge. Aiming to be self-sufficient and provide opportunities for students to work and minimize the need for staff to work hours that do not align with their lifestyle, we aim for students to have access to dining hall student-operated snack bars between lunch and dinner, and potentially a bit after dinner too.

JE: Also, as president what would you do to address student security concerns after the Active Shooter False Alarm in Davis Library?

AA: To address student security concerns, the best thing we can do is to better prepare for such situations. We do not have control over the extraneous factors that affect our sense of security, but we can prepare to deal with them better. We need to do our best to repair the damage that has been caused and to learn from what went wrong, so we can be ready as a community to face those challenges in the future. This will be done through initiating continuous communication between students, pubsafe and administration to respond to security concerns in a timely manner under a student–led safety community.

Aniketan Pelletier '24

JE: What is your Hometown?

Aniketan Pelletier: I grew up around the world, most recently in Antananarivo, Madagascar. My family currently resides in Houston.

JE: What is your major?

AP: I'm a classical studies and math double major, as of now.

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for SGA president?

AP: By living in seven different countries and seeing democratic processes in action around the world,

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Vacancies in International Student and Scholar Services office delays student outreach, support

By LIV SANCHEZ
Contributing Writer

The International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Office is currently experiencing a staffing shortage as a result of the combination of previously vacant positions and the recent medical leave of a staff member.

Assistant Director of ISSS Christy Fry has taken "a medical leave for the rest of spring term, and [ISSS is] still seeking to fill our two staff vacancies (in VT and CA)," according to Kathy Foley, associate dean and director of ISSS. Foley said that Fry's "duties are now spread among the existing ISSS team." However, ISSS is still facing difficulties because of the poor timing of the shortage.

Foley is referring to the large volume of new I-20s, or the Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status, and DS-2019s, or the Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status, that the office issues around this time of the year to incoming international students, foreign exchange students, teaching assistants or staff and faculty. These documents allow recipients to then apply for a U.S. Visa to begin their time with the college.

On top of that, as summer approaches, international students with internships need the office to approve their Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for employment authorization, and international seniors often apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT), which allows them up to 12 months of off-campus employment, if they are interested in working in the U.S. post-graduation. The OPT process requires ISSS to assist by proofreading each student's application to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services and supplying a new I-20 document, a process that could take weeks even before Fry's departure.

Daleelah Saleh/The Middlebury Campus
The ISSS Office is located in the Service Building.

"[Fry's departure] means that we are facing our peak document processing and advising period without a full team," Foley said.

Foley's primary concern, as noted in an email sent out to international students on April 4, is ISSS's ability to "provide accurate and timely immigration-related guidance in a kind and caring way."

"Because we are being pulled in many directions…we may not be able to respond as quickly as you hope," the email said. In the email, Foley also explained that ISSS is not currently able to offer drop-in hours, the time when students typically receive travel signatures on their I-20 documents or ask questions related to navigating the U.S.. The office is now operating on an appointment-only basis. In the future, the office hopes to make informal interactions and walk-ins more available, according to Foley.

In an email to The Campus, Foley acknowledged the responsibility that ISSS bears. "ISSS is committed to supporting our international students, scholars and faculty and researchers who come to pursue their educational and/or career goals across our institution," she said.

Foley described the office's current priorities as tending to the most pressing needs of Middlebury's international community.

"We are focused right now on currently enrolled students as they pursue their studies and anticipate their summer or post-graduation employment options, while also dedicating attention to our incoming students for summer and fall, our faculty, staff, and researchers and alumni, too," Foley wrote.

However, as noted in the email sent to international students, these processes are hindered by the current personnel shortage.

"We are doing this while we've been managing staff vacancies in Middlebury and Monterey. One of our vacancies is for the position of ISSS Assistant Director [in Monterey]," Foley explained. "We recently relaunched our search for a qualified colleague to fill that role and hope to hire a new ISSS team member soon."

In other measures taken to mitigate the effects of the shortage, Foley said that the team has reshuffled staff and responsibilities for certain positions. Loren Scott was promoted from International Services Specialist to a new ISSS Data Systems, Engagement and Operations Manager position in January. In the beginning of March, the office reached out to international students for casual chats with finalist candidates in an effort to fill the vacant spot. The office recently hired International Services Specialist Tracy Coné-Muccini to fill the role Scott previously held.

"Having these two roles filled will help us support students even better," Foley said.

Immigration Specialist Janet Hulnick and Foley are also advising and supporting international undergraduates this spring. "Collectively we have been striving to assist students with their immigration-related concerns and to direct them to other institutional resources when warranted," Foley said.

Juan Diego Riascos '26, international student from Ecuador, shared his perspective on how ISSS interacts with students. "I feel like sometimes it's hard to get [ISSS] to respond to emails, or get them to give back documents, but it's been like that ever since I applied to Middlebury, so I don't feel like there's any change on that," Riascos said. "I haven't heard people being very vocal about the ISSS [situation]."

Remzije (Katerina) Kupe '25, who is from Greece, shared how she felt the understaffing was affecting international students. "I know many people are unhappy — the UWC [United World Colleges] group chat has been going crazy," Kupe said.

The group of international students that feels the repercussions of the understaffing most acutely, according to Kupe, are seniors who must navigate the visa system as part of their post-grad planning.

Davis Library left understaffed after four librarians depart

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the upcoming fall semester, when all first-year seminars will each need one to two class sessions with a librarian instructor, on top of other departments that seek classroom instruction. With only four librarian instructors and a minimum of 2,500 students including first-years, Frazier said attending to all of their needs will present significant difficulty.

According to Fraizer, the deselection process, in which librarians sift through their collection to eliminate items that are no longer relevant to make room for new material, is another function that gets delayed when there is not enough staff to attend to it. They began the process before the Covid-19 pandemic with the intent of finishing it within a couple of years, however, the timeline has now extended four or five years since they started.

"It's what makes the library work, but we only have a certain amount of time we can devote to it. It's one of those functions that kind of start to fall away when there's just not enough people to cover everything," Frazier said.

Simpkins is facing separate challenges in the absence of a Collections Development Librarian, a full-time position that makes decisions about the library's purchases of databases, subscriptions and other material. Without someone to cover those responsibilities, the majority of purchasing decisions fall on him, in addition to his usual work of ensuring the material is paid, discoverable in the library systems and accurately described in the library catalog (MIDCAT) and discovery layer (LibrarySearch).

Before the previous Collections Development Librarian left, he and Simpkins had a series of conversations about the plans the librarian had envisioned for the future of their collection purchases, but even with this knowledge and Simpkins' extensive library experience, making these choices and communicating with all of his staff has not been an easy task.

"I talk to vendors. I'm trying to stay in the lanes that we've historically been buying in. I'm trying to be a little bit conservative in how I make my decisions. I don't want to tie the hands of the person that we ultimately do hire — it's kind of a balancing act," Simpkins said. "I'm answering emails until nine, 10, sometimes 11, o'clock at night, it feels like pretty much 24/7 at this point."

"There's a certain expertise to think where you want to go long-term with how we spend our money and build our collections, so there's a risk — if we don't fill the position — there's a risk that we don't perform well," Mike Roy, dean of the library, said.

Two out of the four librarians that left were on the library's leadership team, leaving the team with only three members.

"There are just fewer brains to bounce ideas off of, that many fewer perspectives," Simpkins said.

Another issue is a lack of available substitutes when someone is absent from work — all of the remaining librarians have pitched in extra hours to cover for each other.

In addition to the incoming User Experience Librarian, the hiring team is currently in the process of interviewing candidates to fill the vacancies and are hoping to bring someone into the Collections Management position by July, before workloads increase in the fall. They anticipate going into the fall with two positions still vacant.

"The searches we're in right now have a really strong pool," Roy said. "We've been very lucky so far."

Simpkins and Roy described the hiring process as long. Once approval is given by the Ways & Means Committee, it can take one to two months to collect a group of applicants. Subsequent screenings, bringing candidates to campus for interviews, potential salary negotiations (a process that may look different with the new compensation system) and waiting for the prospective hire to accept the offer and relocate to Vermont can take three to four months.

Roy views this as an exciting opportunity to re-evaluate what the library should do with each position.

"This will be a new turning point moment with lots of new voices and new ideas," he said.

Frazier added that with four positions to tweak at once, they have the chance to almost reinvent the department.

Simpkins is also looking forward to working with someone who will bring new ideas to collections management.

"I have been here 23 years, and it's easy to start developing blinders in a way," he said. "It's always useful, great, helpful, invigorating to get somebody from a different place with a different place with a different perspective and different ideas."

Before the empty positions are filled, the current librarians will have to continue to work around the vacancies by pushing non-student-related tasks aside and picking up the extra slack. "We're really hoping we can get some people back for the fall so that we are able to support all our classes," Roy said.

Staffing crisis in food services causes early closing of the Grille, Crossroads and MiddXpress

By JESSICA LI
Contributing Writer

Staff shortages at the Grille, Crossroads Cafe and MiddXpress have resulted in limited hours. Former employees cited frustration with student behavior, the local housing market and retirement as reasons for leaving.

This week, MiddXpress has returned to normal operating hours, while the Grille is now open only between 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and is not open on weekends. Crossroads hours have been irregular due to shifting Grille hours, but they have returned to normal this week.

According to Dan Detora, executive director of food service operations, there are currently 16 vacant full-time positions in dining throughout campus, including 10 vacant cook positions. The night shift at the Grille is one of the most affected areas with the usual eight staff members reduced to three.

"Night Grille is always a challenge because of the late-night aspect of it, and cooks in general throughout campus," Detora said. "We're really struggling in those areas."

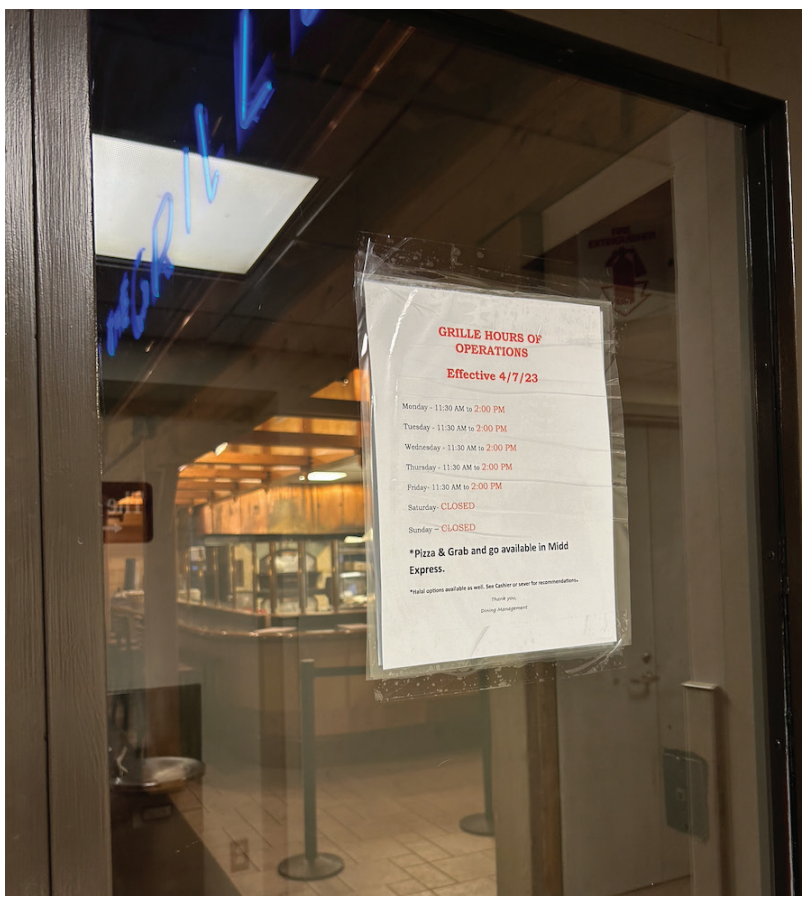
The town of Middlebury's lack of affordable housing and the inconvenience of commuting for staff living in surrounding areas are both reasons for the staffing shortage.

"If you look at the Boston schools or the inner city schools, they have three things that we don't have. They have a lot of people. They have low income housing, and they have public transportation. We don't have any of those, so it's a challenge," Detora said.

Besides these financial difficulties, retirement en masse has also contributed to the severe staff shortage in dining facilities, adding uncertainty to how long the shortage will continue to affect the dining services options in McCullough Student Center.

"The great thing about our current staff is we have a lot of long term employees and a core group of amazing dining service employees. The bad thing is they've been here a long time, and they're starting to retire," Detora said. "Over the last two years, I think we've had five or six individuals retire. After graduation, we have two more retiring."

Detora also spoke about how unacceptable student behaviors, especially on the weekends, have put extra pressure on the staff. Out of the three staff members that left the Grille, two of them said students' behavior was the main reason for their departure.


GRILLE HOURS OF OPERATIONS
Effective 4/7/23
Monday - 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Tuesday - 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Wednesday - 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Thursday - 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Friday - 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Saturday- CLOSED
Sunday - CLOSED
*Pizza & Grab and go available in Midd Express.

Abigail Chang/The Middlebury Campus
Crossroads Cafe, MiddXpress and the Grille are located in McCullough Student Center.

While the adjustments in operating hours have brought many inconveniences, students have been particularly affected by the Grille's early closing because food options at night are now largely reduced.

"It's hard to find a place for food at night after dinner," Sheila Lam '26 said. "I need a place where I can get hot meals aside from regular dining hours."

The shortage has also led Dining Services to cut stations in Ross and Atwater dining halls. It's difficult to ask staff working the day shift to work overtime, because many of them have a second job.

At the moment, Dining Services plans to keep MiddXpress open until midnight to offer students pizza and other hot food. Dining halls are also ordering pre-cut vegetables to help staff members save time in food preparation.

Despite these reductions, Dining Services plans to continue the prolonged lunch hours at Atwater in the fall as a way to cope with the staff shortage. According to Detora, however, the availability of dining halls will depend on future developments to this issue.

"In the worst case scenario, it could come to a point where one of the dining halls has to reduce its offerings to just sandwiches, and the other two extend their hours of operation," he said.

Detora remained hopeful about Dining Services' plans for the future but acknowledged the difficulty of returning to normal services with this ongoing shortage.

"We're trying to come up with some plans, for sure, but some of that certainly will affect students and how we feed them. We're trying to do the best we can and try not to take away services, but when we only have three people at the Grille, it's impossible to open that facility at night, just impossible," Detora said. "We need to develop, and we're looking into that with our human resource department, some long term plans to answer the staffing crisis."

Editor's Note: Sheila Lam '26 is an Online Editor for The Campus.

MIDDLEBURY STUDENT, VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER SETS NEW WORLD RECORD

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Jones felt fairly confident about the possibility of breaking the record.

"Running with all the gear is obviously pretty horrible, and not something you want to do all the time," Jones said. "I accidentally broke the record in the practice round, so I thought I would have a good chance."

Among the crowd of supporters on Saturday were dozens of college students, including Jones' teammates from Middlebury Water Polo. Additionally, some Middlebury professors and local families attended to demonstrate their support. The event grew to include more people after Jones realized she needed two videographers, a photographer and independent witnesses in order to validate her accomplishment to the Guinness Book of World Records.

"My original plan was for it to just be me and some friends and people from the town helping out and it very quickly turned into a much bigger community event than I was expecting," Jones said. "Everyone really came out and rallied to the event, and I think that definitely helped a lot and made for a super fun day."

Courtesy of Iman Behbehani

Jones in her firefighting equiptment, including respirator (left) and Jones with fans and onlookers (right).

Isabel Tseng '23 volunteered at the event as an assistant photographer, and she enjoyed getting to witness the unique experience of watching a Middlebury student break a world record.

"I was super excited to go because it seemed like a once in a lifetime opportunity and it was so cool for this to be happening on our campus," Tseng wrote to The Campus.

Tseng was also impressed by the commitment and physical endurance Jones exhibited while attempting to break the record.

"It was honestly crazy to watch her break the record," Tseng added. "It was specifically wild when she would run past me because I could hear her breathing through the oxygen mask and it was clear how much effort it was taking — this really displayed the difficulty of what she was doing."

When asked how she recovered from the intense run Jones explained that because she only spent eight minutes in the suit that day, she avoided any serious consequences. "[After the run] I went and played a water polo tournament," she added.

As for her future plans, Jones does not have any other records in her sights right now but she looks forward to finding new challenges for herself.

"This summer I'll be up in Alaska, and then I'm maybe hoping to run an ultramarathon or two," she said. "I'm always kind of doing weird things like this. It's not my first rodeo."

Meet the 2023–24 SGA candidates

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I've developed an appreciation for how local participation can make real changes in people's lives. That's why I'm running for SGA president: to restore faith in the power of the SGA to be a truly effective student government body. I want to use its powers to do things like bring back the Grille, reform parking and release a comprehensible report on the school's finances for students.

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

AP: The qualities I'd bring to the table are ambition and perseverance. Throughout my time at Middlebury, I've learnt that temporary defeats can be surmounted, and I hope to use this attitude as president to continue to pursue my policies despite whatever roadblocks may appear. I also hope to be the most ambitious SGA president ever, pushing the student government's powers further than before to achieve positive changes in students' lives.

JE: What would you do as SGA President to improve the accessibility of food on campus at night, specifically how will you fix the Grille and Dining hall Hours?

AP: I would use SGA Finance Committee funds to pay workers at the Grille a bonus. The SGA has no say in what the school pays workers, but it can pay "bonuses" on top of wages, which will raise actual hourly pay to the point where workers will begin coming back, thus restoring the Grille to full functionality. This is a similar model to how 10 o'clock Ross was financed last year. Dining hall hours would be more difficult; solutions like changes to breakfast hours to allow for later dinner hours could be envisioned.

JE: As president what would you do to address student security concerns after the Active Shooter False Alarm in Davis Library?

AP: As president, I would hold a full inquiry into the actions of officials during the Davis shooting [threat] situation, how those responsible can be held accountable, and into how the emergency alert system can be improved.

Junior Senator Candidates

Afra Fairooz '25

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for senator?

Afra Fairooz: I want to increase the representation of international students, people of color, the queer community and women on campus and bridge the gap between these groups and the administration.

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

AF: Middlebury has been consistently getting better at increasing the diversity on campus and addressing the problems that different communities face. However, there are certain issues that are exclusive to the international community that need to be highlighted. One such issue is the barriers that international students face while seeking help from the ISSS office. Given that the office is severely understaffed, students usually have to wait for a long period of time (sometimes 2 weeks) to get responses back from the office, often regarding time sensitive matters as well. Which inevitably leads to a lot of stress for both the parties. Given the lack of staff, they also have a limited capacity to provide support to students facing Visa, OPT, CPT etc. This has been a persistent issue for the last two years and I think that proper steps should be taken to mitigate it. One way could be to equip the office with the resources to hire student interns who could help them out with comparatively less sensitivity (checking emails for example. I would be willing to work with the administration closely in order to solve this Issue.

Sophomore Senator Candidates

Josie Chun '26

JE: What is your hometown?

Josie Chun: My hometown is Atlanta, Georgia.

JE: What is your major?

JC: My major is Environmental Policy/Economics.

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for senator?

JC: I am running for SGA Senator to increase transparency between the SGA and the student body by strengthening the framework and initiatives for next year's Sophomore Committee. As a BIPOC student (Korean-American) with a passion for increasing cultural diversity through my current on-campus leadership roles, I want to serve as a representative to increase BIPOC and first-gen applications for next year's SGA Committee roles. I have experience serving on an SGA committee and have the disposition to work collaboratively as a team to create effective solutions that put our class' needs first.

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

JC: I believe I can create a passionate, structured, and transparent environment by initiating more fun, themed events (ex: bringing back Valentine's matchmaking, snow/sled J-Term events, etc.) and open dialogue forums that engage the student body, faculty and administration. I also plan to vouch for sustainable changes and bills that advocate for environmental engagement. For example, I plan to increase access to outdoor recreation and activities (skiing, hiking, lake-going, etc.) to minority groups on campus who may not have had prior opportunities to explore the environment outside of the campus. By working alongside my co-senator, I hope to encourage non-SGA members to propose new solutions and bills as I believe student engagement is the most critical to the effectiveness of Student Government. Additionally, I hope to increase class exposure to upcoming internship opportunities, CCI-sponsored events, scholarship opportunities through social media and more CCE/CCI engagement. I will be open-minded to academic, social and financial proposals and look forward to working with the future Sophomore Committee in making our sophomore year unforgettable. I am currently campaigning with YiJun Kim as we have been diligently working together in our current First-Year Committee, and look forward to election day.

Bryan Harris '26

JE: What is your Hometown?

Bryan Harris: My hometown is Los Angeles, California.

JE: What is your major and minor, if you have a minor?

BH: I am an International Politics and Economics major with a Philosophy minor.

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for senator?

BH: Being a first-generation Afro-Latino, running for SGA Senator to benefit my community is my goal. The Middlebury community has given me many perspectives, many insights and has made such an impact on me being a Middlebury college student. I want to use the analytical skills and wisdom that I have learned here at Middlebury along with the advocacy and responsibility that I have gained from my high school to help the community that has benefited me

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

BH: I aim to bring experience in student activism and leadership to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. I plan to support initiatives that increase access to resources and opportunities for all students, promote mental and physical health support, empower marginalized communities and promote communication between students and administration. If elected, I will advocate for the needs of underrepresented students and create a welcoming and inclusive campus environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equity. I also plan to work towards addressing economic barriers faced by low-income students through initiatives such as healthcare services and opportunity grants. By promoting transparency and collaboration, I aim to ensure that student needs are met, and the SGA and administration work together to create a better campus experience for all.

YiJun Kim '26

JE: What is your hometown?

YiJun Kim: I'm from Las Vegas.

JE: What is your major and minor, if you have a minor?

YK: I am currently undeclared, but I'm thinking about majoring in political science and minoring in global health.

JE: Can you give a brief description of your personal background and why you are running for senator?

YK: Throughout high school, I've always had a passion and have taken an active role in student government, acting as a class and student body president, board member to the Nevada State Board of Student Councils and student representative to the school board. With these experiences, I will continue to advocate and share feedback from the student body to better support my peers, especially historically underrepresented groups. I have the desire to use my previous leadership qualities and experiences to help create a sense of community here at Midd, whether that's through planning fun whole-grade outdoor activities such as square dancing, a day out at Lake Dunmore or writing/submitting bills on changes that the students want to see.

JE: If elected, what qualities and policies would you uniquely bring to the table? What is your vision for Middlebury?

YK: Because I don't own a vehicle, I, along with many of my peers, struggle the most with figuring out transportation from and to the airport. I believe that the current SGA break bus system could be altered to better accommodate students who do not have reliable transportation. If elected, this issue would be my priority to tackle in figuring out a better way of accommodating students with transportation. Another goal of mine is to be more transparent with what the senators can do in terms of making institutional changes. It's important to make sure the student body is aware that they can communicate with the senators to discuss any issues or changes they want to see. I also want to help the underclassmen build connections with the upperclassmen, specific to their respective degrees/departments. Although we have many clubs that are specific to interests and departments, being able to connect with upperclassmen at these clubs can be challenging and intimidating, as attending clubs is a time commitment and students must go out of their way to actively try to make connections. By establishing a system where students can easily chat with upperclassmen with the same degree(s), the underclassmen can get advice pertaining to career choices and courses to take/not take. My vision for Middlebury is ultimately to bridge the differences in our class as we come from different backgrounds and cultures, through open-minded discussions and fun community activities. My ultimate goal is to provide academic and social support to the student body. I'm currently campaigning with Josie Chun, whom I have been working closely with for the past few months in the SGA first-year committee. I'm confident in our abilities to work together to establish a sense of community for the sophomore class.

You can learn more about the presidential candidates and their platforms at the SGA Presidential Debate in Crossroads Cafe at 7 p.m. on April 23.

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ADDISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SEEKS NEW SUPERINTENDENT

By COLE CHAUDHARI
Staff Writer

The Addison County School District (ACSD) is currently in the final stages of hiring a new superintendent, filling a vacancy left by former ACSD Superintendent Peter Burrows.

The district serves students grades K-12 from the towns of Bridport, Cornwall, Middlebury, Ripton, Salisbury, Shoreham and Weybridge.

In an email to The Campus, chair of the ACSD School Board Barb Wilson wrote that Burrows first notified the district of his leave in December of 2022, explaining that he was seeking "superintendencies in urban settings, outside of Vermont."

Burrows served the ACSD for 10 years and officially resigned on January 30 of this year.

In her email, Wilson explained the various methods that the ACSD Board has been using to reach candidates for the superintendency

"The ACSD Board advertised the position on a national scale, in addition to advertising in Vermont," Wilson said.

Wilson noted that one important tool to the ACSD search is the executive recruitment website McPherson & Jacobson LLC, which averages over 225,000 hits per month.

In the recruitment brochure that the district put out on the website, the qualifications require that the candidate have "the background, skills and abilities essential for excellence in educational leadership."

The brochure also emphasizes the importance of a commitment to equity and the uplifting of student diversity, especially in rural communities and across varied socioeconomic conditions.

Among the list of qualifications for prospective superintendents are an aptitude for data-driven decision making, collaborative and interpersonal communication, and a proven record of success in administrative education positions.

Wilson explained that the process for hiring a new superintendent is close to complete — the school board has selected two final candidates and expects a conclusive decision between the two to be made on or shortly after April 20.

On April 20, the board will be hosting a Zoom community forum for the two superintendent finalists, which will allow students and parents of the district to ask questions directly to the candidates.

One of the candidates, Suzanne Gruendling, is the current Director of Policy Implementation for the Essex-Westford School District in Essex Junction, Vt. Prior to her current role, Gruendling served as the principal of Summit Street Elementary school, also in Essex Junction. Gruendling holds a Master of Liberal Arts Management degree from Harvard Extension School and a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Vermont.

Courtesy of Steve James
Addison Central School District Superintendent leaves district to pursue a job leading a district in Milton,

The second candidate, Barbara Anne Komons-Montroll is the superintendent of the Windham Southwest Union Supervisory Union in Wilmington, Vt., a role which she has held since 2018. Komons-Montroll has been an educator in Vermont for over 30 years, holding previous roles as an elementary school teacher and principal in Underhill, Worcester and Charlotte. Komons-Montroll holds a Master of Educational Leadership degree from the University of Vermont.

Though transitioning from one superintendency to another is one of the most substantial shifts that a school district can undergo, the Addison County School District is committed to upholding their core mission statement throughout the adjustment, according to Wilson.

"Though it is inevitable that change will occur when you hire a new district leader, the board is committed to hiring a district leader who will help the board work towards fulfilling our mission," Wilson wrote.

JUICE AMOUR SERVES UP SMOOTHIES, VEGAN FOOD IN DOWNTOWN MIDDLEBURY

By MANDY BERGHELA
SGA Correspondant

On a hot spring day, following a workout or on a walk through town after class, Juice Amour is a go-to destination for both Middlebury students and town residents.

Since moving locations from Route 7 South to 16 Merchants Row in October 2021, the juice bar has provided the town of Middlebury with many forms of healthy vegan options.

Sheri Bedard and her father David Bedard co-own the business, and they pride themselves on ensuring the community has access to nutritious and delicious vegan food.

"We have a strong belief in the health benefits of consuming vegan food and nutrient dense vegetable and fruit juices," said Shawna Sherwin, a staff member of Juice Amour. "We also get our produce from local organic Vermont farmers, because of a principle of the company's mission to make a minimal impact on the earth."

Since its grand reopening in 2021, Juice Amour has been pleased with how business is going. The health benefits and sustainability Sherwin referred to are what make clients and customers continue to return to the store.

"One of the reasons I like Juice Amour is because they use organic and whole ingredients that are so tasty," Josie Chun '26 told The Campus. "Their smoothie and drink menu is very diverse from dates, coffee beans to celery."

The shop is most well-known for its smoothies and drinks. "Our smoothies provide you with the highest amount of nutritional value possible, and right now, our best selling smoothie is the Berry Monkey — strawberries, bananas, housemade cashew milk and apple juice," Sherwin said.

Juice Amour's smoothies are also made with their famous homemade cashew milk, which customers love. "A cool thing they do is make their nut milks from scratch, right at the shop," Chun said. The milk is made directly in house with only locally sourced ingredients.

Their juice cleanses have also gained popularity in the last year, with more clients embarking on their Juice Amour Vermont Cleanse. At Juice Amour, there are three levels of juice cleansing — beginner, intermediate and master. The juices served, as well as the amount of solid food that is provided with the juices, change from level to level. Sherwin said that the beginner cleanser is a great start for people, especially students, who have not done a juice cleanse yet and are unsure if they can go a day without solid food.

The store's juice cleanses also have different durations, including one-, three- and five-day cleanses, depending on how long the customer wants to cleanse. The Juice Amour team creates a specific schedule for clients allotting when they can drink their juice. Cleansing kits include a ginger and apple cider vinegar immunity shot to take in the mornings. Throughout the day, clients would then have nutrient-dense juices for each meal, such as a green machine drink for lunch or citrus-based juices to hydrate and purify the body before bed. They also include healthy salads in the kit for those who are new to juice cleansing to ease the transition from solid to all liquid.

Besides juices, Juice Amour sells a variety of vegan food items out of their kitchen from apple nachos to crunchy chickpea caesar salad. They aim to reinvent the vegan stereotype that tends to scare many away, making it accessible for everyone.

"If you need to try one of the restaurant items, the sesame noodles are a favorite from the grab and go," Sherwin said.

Juice Amour also caters events, including weddings and office meetings. The shop has catered for the college at various events, such as legislative lunches with students at the Center for Community Engagement, and has provided smoothies for students on campus on a couple of occasions.

The business also aligns with the college's values in sustainability, and they are committed as much as possible to producing little waste, Sherwin said.

"We have a $0.50 deposit return because each of our juices are always served in glass," Sherwin said.

With all the items that Juice Amour has to offer, it may be intimidating to know where to start when going to the restaurant. When asked what is the item on the menu that she recommends the most, Sherwin responded, "The banana cream pie jar is to die for."

Located at 16 Merchants Row, Juice Amour is open Monday and Wednesday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

JUICE AMOUR
RAW • ORGANIC
PUSH DOOR HARD
Tacos Salads Juice Smoothies Bowls
Tacos Salads Plant Based Gifts Bowls
Juice Smoothies Market Snacks Acai

Maggie Reynolds/The Middlebury Campus
Juice Amour, located at 16 Merchants' Row, has now been serving up smoothies and vegan food for a year and a half.

MIDDLEBURY BECOMES PART OF STRING OF HOAX SHOOTER CALLS

By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

After the Middlebury Police Department (MPD) received report that an active shooter had entered Davis Family Library on Sunday, April 9, Middlebury students studying in the library were suddenly confronted by armed officers ushering many of them to shelter in the printer room. A few hours earlier at Boston University (BU), students received a similar alert that there was a report of an active shooter situation.

Both active shooter reports were later determined to be unsubstantiated. In the case of Middlebury, the caller did not identify themselves, and after arriving on site, MPD reported that the threat appeared to have low credibility based on the situation at the library. When asked for a location, the caller to BU said "the University of Boston," a clue that the call was a hoax. The Boston University Police Department responded to the call only to find no shooter.

These fake active shooter calls are identified as hoax calls, sometimes called "swatting calls," meaning that a caller used a fraudulent phone number with the goal of tricking law enforcement agencies into responding with a SWAT team to the fabricated emergency. The hoax call to Middlebury follows a national trend of increased false shooting reports to schools over the past few weeks.

This February, law enforcement agencies across Vermont responded to swatting calls reporting active shooters in nearby K-12 schools. Students at Montpelier High School watched as police surveyed the school grounds. According to Commissioner of Public Safety Jennifer Morrison in a Vermont Public story, law enforcement quickly identified the calls to be a pattern of coordinated hoax due to the volume of the calls and the similarity of their messages.

Although the calls were fake, they caused real harm. Students at Middlebury reported an abnormal sense of tension following the event. At BU, a user posted to the BU subreddit following the incident: "I feel dumb for being shaken up, nothing bad actually happened…so why can I not stop shaking? My heart is racing."

Earlier this month, four Harvard University seniors, all of whom are Black, were woken up by a banging sound on their door, when Harvard University Police Department (HUPD) officers arrived at their suite and ordered them into the hallway at gunpoint. According to reporting from the Harvard Crimson, HUPD was responding to a false 911 call about an armed individual in the undergraduate suite.

The incident caused real psychological and emotional harm to the students. Jarah K. Cotton, a resident of the suite, wrote in an email to The Crimson on Monday, "We were all extremely scared, particularly because my roommates and I are Black students who have been bombarded our whole lives with stories and images portraying how situations such as this had ended up terribly."

Swatting calls affect members of the community to different extents. According to reporting by The Campus, Arthur Martins '23.5, an international student, said he was never trained in a lockdown or active shooter drill. Following the event, student groups such as the International Student Organization have organized community gatherings in light of the event.

Morrison told Vermont Public that these hoax calls likely violate state and federal terrorism laws.

"If the assumption that these are swatting calls are true, this is terrorism to invoke fear and chaos in a community," Morrison said. "So I can think of no other motivation than some depraved person or entity perpetrates these calls to upset communities and create havoc."

Tony Sjodin/The Middlebury Campus
On April 9, MPD recieved a false threat of an active shooter inside Davis Family Library.

EXPLORING THE STONE LEAF TEAHOUSE

By KATHERINE MICHAELSON
Photo Journalist

I'm a very big fan of tea, and the Stone Leaf Teahouse is one of my favorite places in Middlebury. I visit the store regularly, as I find it to be the best place to spend some good, quality time with my school work or friends (or both). With this in mind, I can't quite tell if my motivations behind writing this article are to convince you to also love tea or to discover more about Stone Leaf and tea itself. I'm leaning more towards the latter.

Last Friday, I met with John Wetzel, the owner and founder of Stone Leaf Teahouse. We sat under the sun on the store's patio drinking "dòng dǐng," a type of Taiwanese oolong tea. Our oolong was not served in a mug, but instead presented on a tea tray alongside teaware handmade by one of John's employees.

Having tea at Stone Leaf is special. There is a lot of care that goes into the way his patrons experience the drink and are able to engage with the tea itself, a level of which I haven't found in any other place I've ordered tea. Knowing the rarity of the experience curated in the shop, I went into our conversation with one burning question: how on earth is a place like this located in a small town like Middlebury, Vermont?

"Why in Middlebury? I asked myself that too in the beginning, but now I don't even question it because it grew so slowly and so naturally," Wetzel said.

John initially moved to Middlebury to farm organic vegetables. He's worked a variety of jobs, but what has remained constant was his love and appreciation for tea. He started the tea house in part because he was inspired by the expansion of coffeehouse and cafe culture he observed throughout his time in college. With these spaces becoming centers for art and community that revolved around the beverage, he wanted to construct a space of his own.

"I enjoyed coffee," he explained while refilling my then-empty cup, "but what about tea? People drink tea all around the world. I knew there was something more to it."

The largest motivation for John's career in the tea world, however, was traveling. To source the teas for Stone Leaf, John travels throughout Asia, meeting with various producers from India, China and Japan. It has taken a long time for him to cultivate these relationships, and the ability to connect with people around the world is what John loves so much about his business. The Teahouse allows for these connections from abroad to find a place within the Middlebury community, creating a uniquely global space in our small town. This makes Stone Leaf all the more valuable.

"One of the advantages of being in Middlebury is that [the store is] even more valued because it gives this international connection," John said.

He gave me the final pour of our first pot of tea. I drank it down and then sat, waiting with anticipation for someone to bring us more hot water so we could steep the leaves again.

"I have the space set up so that everything honors where the tea comes from," he said while we waited.

John's personal relationships with and respect for his producers is evident from the various decorations and intentional set-up of the teahouse. He wants to ensure that the hard work and, as he describes, "artistry" of the farmers is not forgotten when enjoying tea at Stone Leaf. With this, it is important to him that the plant is honored as well. The history of tea is long and the variables that influence tea's growth and flavor are nearly innumerable. There is nothing simple about the plant, and the way that John has designed Stone Leaf reflects this.

Talking to John, it was apparent that I was speaking with a man who has a true love for tea, the people who make it and the cultures it developed in. What might be greater than his own love for tea, though, is his love for sharing tea with others. Throughout our conversation, he mentioned that Stone Leaf Teahouse is not run like a typical business. It's not located in a big city, or even on Middlebury's main street. It is a lot more work to offer the experience of serving tea rather than simply being a storefront for the teas John sources. John and his employees founded Stone Leaf Teahouse to connect with communities from across the world, and through this, kindle a passion for tea in his customers with the hope that it will spread to others.

Stone Leaf from the outside.

A student employee standing behind the counter.

"This place grew out of the community here, with the college being a part of that," John said. "I would love to help other people do this in other places so they can have it grow out of the community where they are. Then, there can be unique places that are different than here, but still with the same kind of good tea."

An employee brought us out the pot of hot water we had been waiting for, and John did not hesitate to make us another round of tea. He steeped the leaves quickly, poured for me first, then himself.

In modern life, nearly everything is globalized, but rarely do you find a place as intimately international as Stone Leaf Teahouse. John's devotion to bringing the art of tea and the hard work of people from around the world to the Middlebury community is unique and essential to the community.

Leaving the tea shop that day, I realized I was wrong to initially ask "why Middlebury?" The real question is: Where else but Middlebury?

John Wetzel, saying goodbye to me while holding a tatami mat.

A tea cake printed with Chinese characters "ai lao shan gu shu."

A teamaker's tools.

A student employee making the first pot.

Photos by Katherine Michaelson

GET EXCITED FOR THE BIG ROCKS AND BAGPIPES OF THE MIDDLEBURY HIGHLAND GAMES

Op-Ed

Sam Pelletier *is a co-organizer of the Middlebury Highland Games and a member of the class of 2023.*

We are bringing the Highland Games to Middlebury College. For centuries, people have come together to celebrate Celtic culture at these events, centered around music, dance, food and athletics on Saturday, April 22. Although they originated in the Scottish Highlands, the Highland Games can now be found all over the world and in most U.S. states.

The Middland Games are Middlebury's first official Highland Games. They are a student-led event that has transformed from backyard tree-throwing into a full celebration of Scottish culture and the Middlebury community. Events like the Middland Games are important to the college because they bring people together to continue rich cultural traditions that echo our histories in a meaningful, experiential way. The Games have built community at Middlebury by inviting people with interests in music, weight lifting, dance, Scottish culture, food and sports to come together in enjoyment of the festivities and each others' company. There are many draws to the Middland Games, and they mean something different to each spectator, musician, competitor and organizer. Nonetheless, I feel as though we are all united in a contagious excitement that we welcome everyone in the community to join.

Culture, community and inclusivity are at the heart of the Middland Games, which will consist of traditional Scottish music performed by several Vermont-based instrumentalists and Middlebury students, a Scottish themed food truck and four Highland athletic events with over 40 student competitors. Highland Games athletics are typically contested in tartan kilts, which is the traditional Highland dress. A kilt order went out among the students, and many competitors will be enthusiastically tossing stones in their twirling tartans. Even so, everyone is welcome to compete at the Middland Games, regardless of outfits or cultural heritage. A group of students, with the help of the Student Activities Office, is organizing, running and officiating the Middland Games. The College's support of student initiatives like the Middland Games helps to build a sense of belonging and community among the students.

Highland athletic events demand unconventional, taxing, and often highly technical feats of strength. The Middland Games will include: the caber toss (flip a telephone pole end over end), the stone-to-shoulder (lift a large rock to one shoulder and take a hand away), the Braemar stone throw (like a shot put, but think bigger) and the weight-over-bar (throw a heavy sandbag overhead with one arm to clear a bar that increases in height). In the interest of making these events more accessible to a greater number of people, each event will have a number of different weight options. The goal is to create a welcoming environment by providing an appropriate level of challenge to all competitors.

During practice sessions for the Middland Games, I have experienced primordial feelings of challenge, excitement, frustration and accomplishment, particularly with the caber toss and stone-to-shoulder. There is something unbelievably exciting about trying to pick up a big rock while everyone cheers you on, and I have seen my own excitement, frustration and accomplishment reflected back to me in the faces of our competitors. The community that has gathered around the Middland Games is encouraging, inclusive and enthusiastic.

Courtesy of Sam Pelletier

Middland Games competitor Jack Greenberg '23.5 executes the stone-to-shoulder event at a practice session outside of Coffrin Hall.

These events offer a great spectacle for those who are there to cheer on their friends, enjoy the food and live music and find out what in the world is going on across Battell Beach. The performances of Vermont-based traditional musicians Timothy Cummings (Department of Music affiliate artist on Highland bagpipes), Peter Macfarlane (fiddle), Viveka Fox (fiddle) and Rick Klein (guitar) as well as student musicians Sammy Conrad-Rooney (whistles and smallpipes) and Sam Maxwell (Highland bagpipes) will connect the Middland Games to our broader Vermont community and provide the festive magic of music that has stood the test of time. When played well, I find live bagpipe music to be uniquely powerful in its ability to evoke passion, excitement, melancholy, nostalgia and grandeur. Our fiddlers will lead spectators in traditional dances that help people put aside the concerns of image to join one another in the embodiment of music. The Middland Games is meant to be enjoyed as much by the spectators as by the musicians and competitors.

It has been incredible to see the Middland Games grow from an idea into a reality. This event was made possible through the hard work, creativity and dedication of student organizers, the support of the Student Activities Office and a receptive, adventurous Middlebury community. Helping to pull together the Middland Games has held together my senior year in a number of ways. I have made many new friends, and devoting my efforts to such a positive, exciting community event has added purpose and meaning to my time here at Middlebury. Through my participation in the Middland Games, I have felt more connected to parts of my own family history, a sense of belonging to a rich cultural tradition and greater appreciation for the Middlebury community. I have been pleasantly reminded of the beauty and importance of culture and community, and would like to thank everyone who has involved themselves in the Middland Games.

Please join us in the festivities on Saturday, April 22 at 1 p.m. on Battell Beach.

On becoming a preachy, pick-me pescetarian

Op-Ed

Bella Burke *is an opinions section editor and a member of the class of 2023.5.*

Since I became a pescetarian (a vegetarian that eats fish) over six years ago, I have always tried to be pretty low-key about it. I'm not the type that sits atop a high horse and condemns the world's meat-eaters, or the kind that makes it their entire personality –– even I find those people a bit abrasive. You might think that because I'm writing this piece, I'm not as low-key as I choose to believe, and there may even be some truth in that. Nonetheless, my intention is not to shame meat-eaters, but rather to explain my philosophy and hopefully persuade a few people to stop eating meat along the way.

When people ask me why I'm pescetarian, I usually say something like, "I love animals, but it's just a personal thing, really. I think everyone should eat meat if they want to." I use those lines to end the conversation as quickly as possible so people don't think I'm one of those meat-eater-shaming types. I do mean it, though. Just with a few qualifications.

My personal philosophy is that you should not eat meat if you could not muster the courage to watch the meat-producing animal be killed. Thinking about it in these terms is what ultimately persuaded me to become a pescetarian when I was sixteen. I have always loved animals (and sometimes even prefer their company to humans). Therefore, I eventually realized that I could not justify eating them when I shuddered at the thought of watching them die. I was succumbing to blissful ignorance, choosing to never fully think about what I was eating or how it got onto my plate. The cognitive dissonance became too much to bear, so I made the decision to stop eating meat (unless it is fish) altogether.

If you are not terribly bothered by the realities of the meat industry –– which include animal suffering and environmental devastation –– then by all means, keep doing what you're doing. I know that not everyone thinks about these things in the same way that I do, and while I don't understand it, I respect your opinion. We'll agree to disagree.

But now, I turn to the people that still eat meat but take issue with the meat industry or are curious about becoming vegetarian or pescetarian. If you've thought about it before but haven't yet made the commitment, I imagine you've come up with several reasons why you think it would be too difficult. In an effort to push you in the direction of cutting out meat, I'll address some of the main hesitations that I grappled with to make you realize that it's actually quite easy, especially at Middlebury.

You might think that you like meat too much to ever give it up. This is the reasoning I used to justify eating meat before I became pescetarian. I ate it with basically every meal. I still love the smell of burgers on the grill and bacon in the morning. So believe me when I say that cutting out meat was hard at first. But it helped to remind myself why I chose to stop eating meat in the first place. For me, it was my love of animals. For you, it could be anything, from wanting to do your part in protecting the environment to improving your health. Committing to this goal –– whatever your personal incentive may be –– will be far more rewarding than the momentary gratification you get from eating a burger. And (don't laugh), the fake meat options are surprisingly good these days. My dad (a meat-eater) and I went to Burger King to try the Impossible Whopper, and he swore that he couldn't tell the difference.

You might also worry that you won't get enough to eat. Trust me, at least while you're at Middlebury, you'll be just fine. The dining halls always have some substantial vegetarian option that usually includes a source of protein at every meal. You will certainly be able to find something that you like, even if it means making your own panini at Proc. Likewise, almost every restaurant in the U.S. has, at the very least, one vegetarian option on the menu, even if sometimes –– but rarely –– it's grilled cheese in the kids section. You'll be able to make it work wherever you go.

I admit, however, that it can be difficult being a pescetarian when someone else is hosting you. For me, this is the most difficult part. It's hard to be the perfect guest when your elective diet dictates whether or not you can eat the food your hosts so graciously provide for you. As a generally anxious person who is constantly worried about making a good impression and not burdening my hosts, this is tough. But I've come to realize that most hosts aren't offended. In fact, they usually admire my decision. If you face a situation in which your hosts seem bothered by your diet, consider it much more a reflection of them than it is you. These days, many people have dietary restrictions and do not deserve to be perceived negatively as a result.

Alas, it appears I have become one of those preachy, pick-me pescetarians, but I accept my fate. I love animals. As ridiculous as it sounds, I actually believe that they are friends, not food (yes, I eat fish, but I have –– albeit uncomfortably –– seen them die, and they do not experience pain like farm animals). If, for any reason at all, you have considered or are considering cutting meat out of your diet, I hope this op-ed can help push you in that direction.

From friends to family through fellowship

Op-Ed

Zoe Wang *is the co-treasurer of Middlebury InterVarsity and a member of the class of 2025.*

No, InterVarsity (IV) is not a sport –– it's InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. At Middlebury College, we seek to create a space for those looking to explore what it means to have a relationship with God alongside our peers. Our goal is to love the Lord our God and love our neighbor as ourselves. MiddIV has helped me through the ups and downs of college life, including missing home, struggling to find the most joyful path and navigating feelings of stress, confusion and loneliness.

What does this look like? What does that mean? What is Christian Fellowship?

MiddIV offers a unique experience for everyone, as each of us are on our own life journey, but we gather often to talk, laugh, cry, complain and pray together. We have weekly large and small group meetings, go to church, and hold morning and evening prayers. We also participate in retreats and a spring break mission trip. We love good food — both cooking and eating — while sipping our favorite Capri Suns. With all the events we have going on for students to choose from, I encourage you to come and give us a chance to show you the love that our precious Savior has given us.

Large group meetings always start off with a game. We then come together to worship or reflect and finally conclude with group discussions on a topic from Bible passages. We welcome anyone who is open-minded and curious to join us for however long they like. I love meeting new people from all different kinds of places and hearing parts of their stories. It is a space where we share what God is doing in our lives, ask questions about what it looks like to live out our faith on campus and come together with joy to be in the presence of God and the company of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Small groups are a place to gather and study the Bible in community. We study the Gospel of Mark sometimes by discussing and reflecting, and sometimes by acting out the scene, but we always see ways that God may be speaking to us through His Word. While Bible study is certainly an important aspect of small group meetings, the fellowship we build over the course of the semester culminates with us blessing each other. For our small group, we decided to draw names and give "awards" to whomever's name we picked. I was honored to win the award of "Worst Friend" last semester for not doing "anything" for my friends, while one of my dear friends won the award for "Campus Hazard" as he arrived at Small Group with a sling on his arm. Another won "Best Snacks" because she brings a restaurant with her everywhere she goes.

On Sundays, most of us go to Memorial Baptist Church in town, which a couple of professors also attend. We don't just go to church because we think it's the right thing to do or to check a box off the list of being a good Christian. At church, we hear from a highly educated pastor about which passages in the Bible tell us to trust God, what it means that Jesus is the truth, how to rest in the midst of busyness and more. In college, we're busy balancing academics, sports, relationships and sleep, so it's easy to feel the weight of stress and tiredness. Hearing about how to take a sabbath has taught me that taking time to rest means not worshiping the idol of business and productivity in our capitalistic society. It means recognizing my human limitations and trusting that God will take care of me (which He has time and time again). After church, professors and other members of the community check in with us, sometimes inviting us to their houses for a meal, offering us free storage space over the summer and generally making us feel a part of the community. We also enjoy serving with the children's ministry on Sunday mornings and youth group on Saturday evenings, where we play games with them, talk about what it means to pray, have a relationship with God and love the people around us.

I love going to morning and evening prayer spaces, hosted by my friends, to catch up with them and talk about life before we sit at the feet of Jesus and pray together. The space is left open for people to just come and exist. We share prayer requests and thank God for everything He's given us. Some prayers go unsaid, but during our hard weeks especially, we pray over each other, carry each other's burdens and lift them up to God. My friends' prayers are always filled with love, compassion and mercy. I am truly grateful for the MiddIV community God has given me that has allowed me to be my full self, to make mistakes and be forgiven, to push me to grow when life just seems to suck, to point me back to Jesus when I get lost, and to support me when I am lonely or struggling. No one leaves these events without a hug. Sometimes it takes us forever to leave, and we give each other multiple hugs before actually going. After morning prayer, we get breakfast together before classes (usually we make it on time). It is always a great way to start my day with calm and peace in the presence of Jesus and with people who genuinely care, see and love me as I love them.

If you had asked me at the beginning of this year to write this, it would have looked very different. Many of my closest friends now are people I hadn't met or didn't know well at the beginning of this year, but through this group, God moved so drastically in my life where I now have His peace, His joy, His hope in the midst of busyness and stress. Although Jesus coming to save us doesn't mean that all our pain goes away or that our life is perfect or easy, He assures us that we are not alone when we are stressed, anxious, nervous, lonely, depressed or insecure. He provides a way for us to heal and grow from things that weigh us down or try to knock us over, because He knows that being a student at Middlebury isn't easy. On the good days, we are there to celebrate with each other, praise God for His goodness, and put our hope in ways that He will continue to work. Change is a process that takes work and intentionality, but in the end, it is so rewarding and worth it. If you are searching for genuine relationships where you are seen, known and belong, come and see the community that has come to be our MiddIV family.

Spring us from our academic cage

Editorial

This editorial represents the opinion of The Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

Susanna Schatz

While we may still be surprised by another snowfall, it's safe to say that we've made it: spring is here. We've ditched the winter coats. The days are getting longer. The sun feels warmer. The UV index is slowly creeping up and flowers are starting to bloom. Middlebury is finally starting to regain some color after a long, gray winter. With these welcome changes, we are reminded of all the warm weather activities Vermont has to offer.

But with the change of seasons also comes a shift in student culture. Students usually find themselves in an environment where it seems like everyone is competing to be the most productive or have the busiest schedule. As the weather starts to warm up, it transforms into a competition to see who can spend the most time outside with their friends, without falling behind in academics. It is vital to students' long-term health, happiness, and productivity that we — with the support of administrators and faculty — find ways to balance relaxation and work.

Our social media feeds and conversations are slowly but surely being infiltrated by the fun activities our peers are doing in and around Middlebury. Beyond the restrictions of workloads, though, those without access to cars on campus have a much more difficult time participating in some of the activities that people cite as the best parts of going to school in rural Vermont, such as going for hikes off campus or jumping in the Gorge. While there is free and frequent transportation to and from the Snow Bowl during the winter months, the college does not provide students with accessible transportation to outdoor recreation spots during the fall and spring.

Likewise, some students' course loads, extracurriculars, jobs and other responsibilities do not afford them the luxury of taking a break to perch on a sun-soaked rock at Bristol Falls. Just as the weather gets nicer, our workloads begin to get heavier as finals season looms on the horizon. You might wonder, "How do they have time for that?" and "What am I doing wrong that keeps me cooped up in Davis while my friends haven't even unzipped their backpacks today?"

We know — the FOMO is real. And it doesn't just affect graduating seniors who want to enjoy their last month of college, or upperclassmen who want to make up for time lost to the pandemic. Underclassmen, too, are victims of warm-weather FOMO. As a Board, we reflected on how difficult it was to say "no" to activities with our new friends when we were first starting at Middlebury. We worried that if we missed one activity, outing or meal, our friends would forget about us (an undoubtedly irrational, yet common, fear). It was difficult to suppress those anxious feelings and stay in the library when others were out having fun without us.

By no means are we advocating for everyone to ditch their classes and throw their laptops into Lake Dunmore. Our student body has a remarkable work ethic, which is certainly something to be proud of. And for many of us, whether we like it or not, our GPA's are important to potential employers or grad schools. However, it is also essential for your overall well-being to realize that you do not need to spend every minute of every day working. You have to set aside some to relax or you risk burning out. You also deserve to pursue what makes you happy beyond academic validation.

As a result of this tricky balance, we have come up with some suggestions for how to effectively balance your responsibilities when it seems more and more tempting to put down the books, get outside, and enjoy the spring weather.

Prioritize. There are most certainly times when you need to sit down and grind. But on days when you don't have an important deadline and the opportunity presents itself to do something fun, consider going outside and coming to terms with the fact that sometimes, it's not always necessary to read every word of every reading for every class. Cut yourself some slack. The work will still be there when you get back.

Compromise. When you have a lot to do but need to photosynthesize, go sit at a table outside a dining hall or set up camp on an Adirondack chair. You'll probably face off against your internal dialogue that doubts whether or not you can actually get as much work done outside. And while that may be true, you will likely end the day happier than if you spent it inside. Alternatively, try working in your room with the shades and windows open. Some natural light and air can make studying a bit more bearable. Or , if you feel like you must stay in the library to write an essay but your eyes have started to hurt from staring at a screen all day, take a walk and outline the paper in your head.

Say "no" to things. Understand that you can skip some invites. Some days, it might be the best decision to know that the stress is not worth it and choose to turn down social plans. It's unlikely that you'll be able to fully enjoy any outdoor activities with thoughts of unfinished assignments rattling around in the back of your mind. Finish your work and reward yourself with a break after or an adventure the next day.

Focus on yourself. Don't go on LinkedIn. It is very easy, especially in the spring when everyone is posting their post-grad or summer internship plans, to get sucked into the competition culture which causes unnecessary and unproductive stress. Likewise, if you're wondering why so many people get to do fun things while you're trapped in the library, it's very possible that you have different goals, or even that they're up all night finishing the work they didn't get done during the day. Try to only worry about yourself, and the rest will fall into place.

While reframing some of these individual routines may be a good beginning to seeking out a more holistic work-life balance, we also recognize that we need institutional support in order to do this. Though this is first and foremost an academic institution, it's the college's responsibility to promote balance, health and happiness. As such, we ask that the college take a more active role in helping students manage the change of seasons.

Much like the free winter transportation, there should be a free shuttle that runs from ADK to the Snowbowl with an extra stop at the Gorge. This way, people without access to cars can participate in the hiking and swimming near the college.

Professors should be intentional and understanding with the work they give. On occasion, it feels like work is assigned just for the sake of assigning it. Finals season is approaching, and students are already juggling many stressful deadlines. Professors should consider whether an assignment will be truly beneficial to their students' learning before sentencing them to another full day in the library.

Professors should take their classes outside when possible. After all, admissions makes a point to advertise outdoor classes in photos, on its website, or in brochures. At the very least, this could provide the college with some more photo-ops.

Give us a break to enjoy the outdoors, like Mountain Day at Williams College. On a random Friday at Williams every year, the president cancels class and the college provides transportation to fun outdoor activities. Yes, we have Dunmore Day, but a break in the work week would be beneficial.

We recognize that different strategies work for different people, but we hope that you can find something in this article that resonates with you to help ease the transition from winter to spring. Remember to stay true to your goals, but also that the best college memories will most likely not be made in a study carrel.

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Tell the ones you love you love them: Finding a silver lining in my worst fear

Op-Ed

***Rach Peck** is a a member of the class of 2025.*

The college experience at its core is a myriad of "firsts." For me, it's been a time when I've had a number of landmark moments: my first heartbreak, my first tattoo and my first "F" on an assignment. And on April 9, my worst nightmare came true for the first time.

As the suspected active shooter situation was unfolding, I came face-to-face with a stark contrast between the experience of those who do not come from places where this happens and those that do. This contrast became even more evident on Monday, after I had many conversations with American classmates who, when I asked how they were doing, would reply with a comment about how much work they had, or how nice the weather was. So many of the people I spoke to seemed unphased; meanwhile, I was at a loss for words.

Well, that's not quite true. It wasn't that there weren't words that could describe how I was feeling, it was that so many words could describe it. The only answer I could muster when asked how I was doing was "I don't know." Not because I didn't know, but because every possible answer to that question was true.

I was alright because I was alive, while at the same time I was also not alright, because for hours on Sunday it felt very real that I might not be for much longer. I was angry. I was grateful. I was terrified. I was numb. I was exhausted, yet so very awake. I had moments of such intense happiness when I got to hug friends I thought I might never see again, yet these moments felt equally devastating.

This reaction might seem melodramatic. And let me tell you: I understand. I understand that if you grow up one or two degrees of separation from school shootings or bomb threats — or have experienced them yourself — you eventually become desensitized.

I had two more "firsts" after Sunday. For the first time, I felt sorry for Americans. I can't begin to imagine being surrounded by such visceral fear now, let alone in primary and secondary school. But the conversation about desensitization to these events, though incredibly important, is not what feels most important to highlight. What does feel crucial was the other first, or rather, the impact it had on my outlook on life. For the first time, I faced the possibility that I might be about to die.

The psychological impact of that intense moment was not immediate at all. Sitting tucked behind an ottoman in Chrome, I didn't have any of those cliché moments where I realized I'd been living my life wrong or anything of that caliber. The anxiety consumed my thought process entirely. Like a lot of people, I was glued to my phone, switching constantly between texting everyone I knew to make sure they were okay and trying to figure out what was actually happening through GroupMe. I was on autopilot, and I remained in that fugitive mental state for the rest of the night.

When I woke up in the morning, everything felt so incorrect, and I had no idea why. Then it all hit me at once: Oh, right, I thought I was going to f*cking die last night. If you'd done a cross section of my brain on Monday, I would have been unsurprised if it resembled one of those animated states-of-matter diagrams of gas particles — utter chaos. I had absolutely no idea how to proceed.

This chaotic state of mind didn't begin to relent until Monday evening. Walks to the Knoll are often a coping tool for me when I need to clear my head, so as the sky was starting to turn golden, I began to wander. As I rounded the corner of Ridgeline and the sunset came into full view, I was astounded — both by the sunset itself and the overpowering gratitude that I was alive to witness this moment at all. Once the initial overwhelming wave of emotion passed, it occurred to me that Knoll sunsets are one of my favorite things to do here, and yet I've seen so few of them. I so rarely go on a Knoll walk, choosing to do things that give me less happiness instead, because I take it for granted that I'll have so many more opportunities.

It's so cliché, but in that moment, I realized just how much I take for granted. I realized that the tornado of "Are you okay??" texts I sent on Sunday all carried so many unsaid things: I love you, I'm sorry if I ever hurt you, I am so proud of you. I thought about all the times I felt love for my friends and my family and didn't say it. We are united by a fear of expressing how much we mean to each other and that uniting fear drives us apart. It wasn't death that I most feared on Sunday, in truth. It was leaving behind so many people who wouldn't know how much they mattered to me. As the sunset started to dim and settle into dusk, the particles running around in my mind finally started to solidify.

Where do we go from here? For me, my resolution is to lean in to loving more — both personally and interpersonally. This change isn't radical and immediate, rather, it is gradual and intentional. It's often incredibly hard to love ourselves, and I'm not going to pretend like I do, but I've discovered that even if I can't love myself all the time, other people will — and it makes being kind to myself a whole lot easier. I started slipping "I love yous" in when I say goodbye to my friends. I started texting my friends when I think of them to tell them I love them. And I loosened the boundaries a bit on who I say "I love you" to. I never say it when I don't mean it, but I don't let the fear that they won't say it back govern the choice to say it. I no longer assume that I'll have the chance to express that love later because I now know that it's possible I won't.

There's one more thing I've stopped taking for granted, one more vital way I'm leaning in to love: I've walked to the Knoll at least once each day since April 9.

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The Middlebury Campus

"A WOMAN LEFT LONELY": A TRIBUTE TO TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

By JONATHAN EATON
Staff Writer

Victoria Keith's '23 senior thesis, "A Woman Left Lonely," directed by Bri Beach '23 and Sophie Butler-Rahman '25, was an amalgamation of three Tennessee Williams plays: "This Property is Condemned," "Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen" and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."

Following "ROSPO" and "Somewhere" in a series of student-directed plays in Hepburn Zoo, "A Woman Left Lonely" was a powerful feminist tribute to American playwright Tennessee Williams. Keith chose to display Williams' work because she felt like the style and dialogue of his plays reflected many of her own innermost thoughts and worries. After rummaging through her great-grandparents' old playbills from the 1940s and 50s, Keith was reminded that the characters and themes in Williams' plays are just as relevant now as they were three generations ago.

Set in mid-20th-century America, the show opened with "This Property is Condemned," a short play about Willie, an adolescent, orphaned girl living alone in a rural railroad town. Willie idolizes her deceased older sister, Alva, for her beauty and social status. A simple backdrop of silhouetted branches projected on white screens and a few black acting blocks accentuate Willie's search for purpose and acceptance as she faces the world alone.

Next was "Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let me Listen," a short play about a couple whose relationship has frayed. The only props on the stage were a window frame, a bed, a glass of water and a chair. The boyfriend, played by Ben Knudsen '23, recounts the abuse he suffered while unconscious. This play portrays society as perpetually unfair, as the rich enjoy lavish meals with endless alcohol while the protagonist wakes up with burns, bruises and mental trauma floating in a bathtub of ice and beer. Through this depiction of class, Williams elucidates the brutally inescapable boundaries of our society. The woman in the scene, played by Keith, does not engage with her boyfriend's displeasure and unsatisfying existence. Instead, she dreams of escaping to a hotel on the sea where nobody knows her. But this never happens. The pair spend 50 years in isolation, receiving checks, reading books and growing old as they fail to find happiness and meaning in modern America.

The third and final scene of the one-hour performance was an excerpt from "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." Brick, an alcoholic played by Zack Maluccio '23, gloomily drinks while his wife prepares for his father's funeral. Margaret, played by Keith, slowly puts on makeup while trying to seduce Brick after confessing to sleeping with his best friend Skipper back in college. Feeling threatened, Brick violently attacks Margaret with his crutch. In the meantime, Margaret debates whether to stay with Brick despite his alcoholism and lack of sexual desire. However, she struggles to leave him because thanks to Brick's wealth, their marriage has allowed her to reach a higher socioeconomic class.

"I think it was truly interesting to see... that there was a lot of muteness and at the very end, all the scenes came in with a lot of intensity that really hit home, sort of the prowess that the acting brought," audience member Urian Vasquez '25 said.

According to the playbill notes, the three scenes together explore the themes of "illusion, truth, and the performances we all put on to make life more bearable" through their dueling male and female monologues.

"It was a really cool process to be a part of because it's a very non-traditional show in a way with two short plays and one short scene," Butler-Rahman said after the show. "It was just really cool to see how Victoria curated everything and put it all together."

By weaving together Tennessee Williams' unresolved tragic stories about an isolated daughter, a trapped girlfriend and an empowered wife in "A Woman Left Lonely," Keith attacked the core futility of human existence.

Courtesy of Ryan Greguski

Victoria Keith '23 (left) and Ben Knudsen '23 (right) in "Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen."

Radio Roundup: Tunes to help you reel in springtime!

By WRMC EXEC BOARD

Have your Spotify playlists become stale? Is your weekly mix just not cutting it? Maybe it's time to branch out and listen to something new. The Executive Board of WRMC, Middlebury College's radio station, has selected a wonderfully wide range of albums, spanning time and genre, for your listening pleasure. Check out these recommendations and let them become the soundtrack to your semester.

*RIYL (recommended if you like)

Music Director — Yardena Carmi '23

Album: With A Hammer - Yaeji
Genre: Electronic
RIYL: Shygirl, Tirzah, Kelela
Blurb: Yaeji has been making some of the best dance music in recent years, incorporating catchy beats and a unique lyrical blend of English and Korean. Her debut full-length album provides all that and more! With A Hammer chronicles her personal journey of reconnecting with her inner child and processing repressed anger, told through a fantasy quest involving a magic, sentient hammer.

Library Manager — Kyle Hooker '24

Album: And In the Darkness, Hearts Aglow - Weyes Blood
Genre: Folk, Pop
RIYL: Angel Olsen, Jessica Pratt
Blurb: I've been really into this album ever since I heard the song "Grapevine." The vocals are beautiful and have a wistful, dream-like, almost ethereal quality.

Tech Director's Pick — Dan Frazo '23

Album: Aşk - Altin Gün
Genre: Anatolian Rock, Psych Folk
RIYL: Khruangbin, Belle and Sebastian, Sudan Archives
Blurb: Altin Gün is a Turkish rock sextet (their name translates to "Golden Day" in Turkish!) based out of Amsterdam, Netherlands. Their fourth album, Aşk, is a continued homage to the Anatolian rock of Turkey, a genre of rock music that mends the progressive and psychedelic elements of 1960s/70s Western music with traditional Turkish folk.

Social media manager's pick — Georgia Perlah '25

Album: What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World - The Decemberists
Genre: Indie folk
RIYL: The Mountain Goats, Bright Eyes, The Shins
Blurb: What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World is a quintessential 2010s indie album with a bit of twang. Collin Melloy's lyricism is beautiful and existential. This album has been on rotation for me since it came out in 2015 but has recently made a resurgence because it fits with the weather.

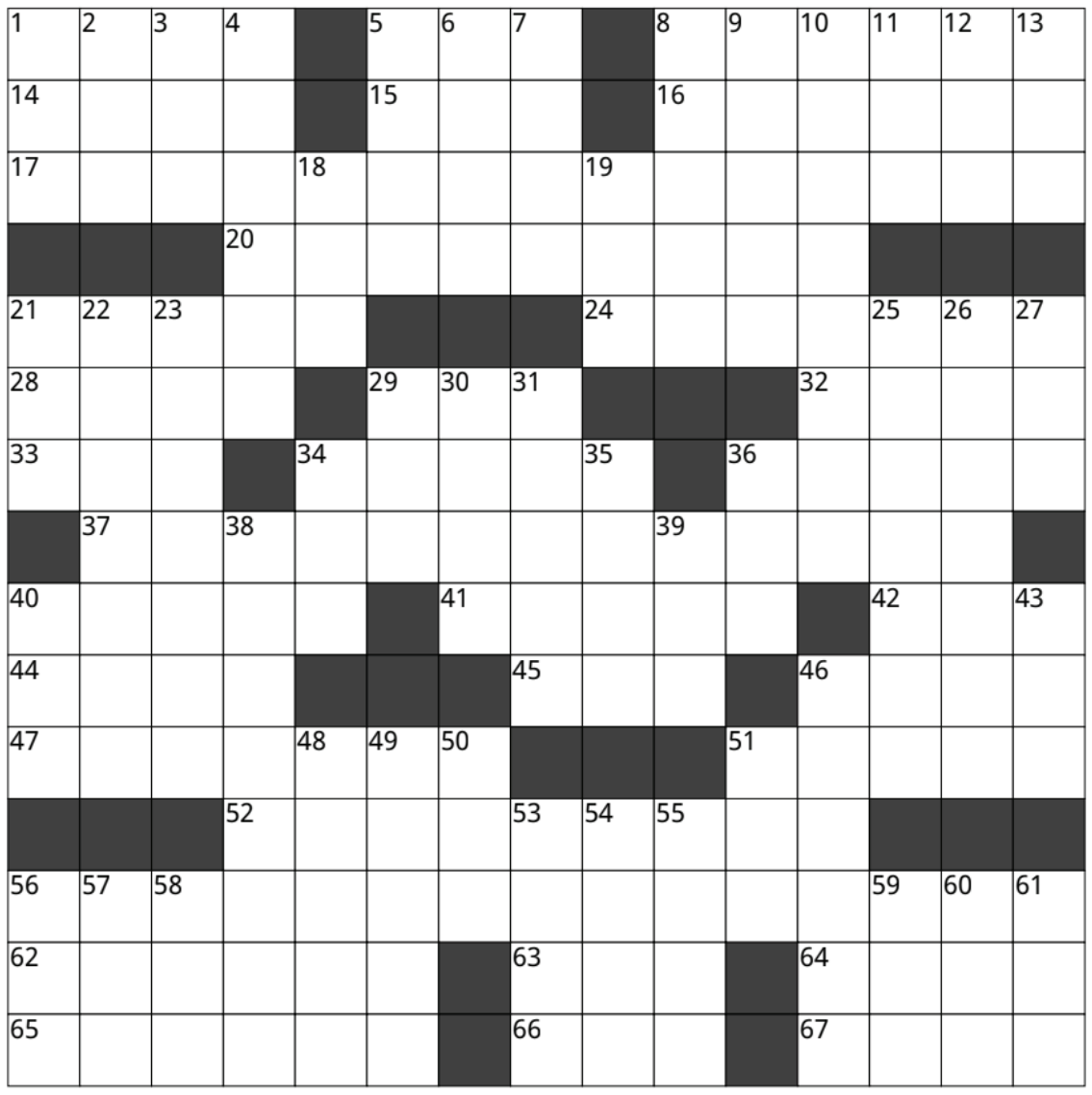
Programming Director's Pick — Chad Kim '23.5

Album: Hollow Me - Yura Yura Teikoku
Genre: Psychedelic Rock
RIYL: Shintaro Sakamoto, Mild High Club, ZAZEN BOYS
Blurb: I am illiterate in Japanese

Pia Contreras

CROSSWORD FOR YOU!!!

By JOSH HARKINS
Puzzle Master



Across

1 Take ____ (go for a swim)
5 Cowboys quarterback Prescott
8 Angels star Shohei
14 Character portrayed by Tom Hiddleston in Marvel movies
15 Corsica ou Réunion, par exemple
16 Hang around
17 *Landmark bill introduced by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
20 Provider of some television and phone connections
21 What an April 22nd holiday celebrates and a hint to the starred clues
24 *The study of relationships among living things
28 Jan. 17th for Mrs. Obama
29 Skin image, for short
32 Apple ex-product
33 Antioxidant drink with Justin Timberlake's endorsement
34 Map within a map
36 Poker entry fees
37 *What you may find many people doing this Saturday
40 Smell
41 Toy (with)
42 Run-____, hip hop group
44 Take care
45 Deg. for many a theater major
46 Telluride and Sorento, for two
47 Encourages forward
51 Fashion house from Rome
52 *Solar and hydro, for example
56 *Movement advocated by John Muir and Rachel Carson, among others
62 With public, how trials in the U.S. should be held
63 Pop
64 Cuatro x dos
65 "In ____" (sort of)
66 Reporters's mgrs.
67 Necessity

Down

1 Prefix with rock
2 Play-____
3 President that the United States liked a lot in the 50s
4 Complete mess
5 Soda option
6 Away from the wind
7 ____ Rations, dog food brand
8 Acid found in soaps
9 Manual opening words
10 Water mark
11 Consumed
12 Agcy. that supports 36-D
13 Not online, e.g.
18 When doubled, showing much enthusiasm
19 Mets and Phillies div.
21 Flow
22 Dongle
23 Staircase feature at waist-level
25 Chose to participate
26 Loses it
27 QB stat.
29 Explosive initials
30 "Yeah, right!"
31 Workout wt.
34 Squid defense
35 Exclamation at the end of the work week, abbr.
36 The Mona Lisa or The Thinker, for example
38 Fairy tale last name
39 ____ la la
40 Name formed by three consecutive letters of the alphabet
43 Forensic t.v. show
46 Into
48 Sunflower ones are good for chewing
49 How a Reuben is served
50 ORE neighbor
51 Progressive spokeswoman
53 Heat legend Dwayne
54 Just a little
55 Purchase offers
56 Letters at some farmers' markets
57 CIA black ____
58 Formerly known as
59 Cold, cold water
60 ____-shed
61 VIP of a subreddit, say

MANDATORY ATTENDANCE: NEW DIRECTIONS STUDENT SHOW

By JOSHUA GLUCKSMAN
Staff Writer

As students, we all know that getting mass emails from the college can be frustrating. Another survey to fill out, an initiative that needs attention, a new administrative position being announced. Nevertheless, the email entitled "Mandatory Attendance" that was sent to hundreds of first-year students on Wednesday, April 12 was no such instant-delete message. In fact, it was the very email that mobilized dozens of students to spend part of their Friday night after a day off from school supporting the arts community on campus. If you haven't yet guessed, this is the email that Joshua Garson '26 sent out to the first year class "cordially" inviting them to his Intro to Dance recital.

As the lights dimmed on Friday, April 14 in the Dance Theatre of the Mahaney Arts Center, well over one hundred students packed into the seating area and even sat on the floor when seating ran out. The email had worked. The event had aptly been dubbed a "happening," as it was an interdisciplinary, student and staff performance incorporating dance, music and visual arts. The event began with students from six different classes standing still and facing the audience in various costumes — some with instruments, others with tutus. The four faculty members, Assistant Professor of Theatre Michole Biancosino, Assistant Professor of Dance Laurel Jenkins, Assistant Professor of Studio Art Michelle Leftheris and Assistant Professor of Music Matthew Taylor, put on this show to kick off the wider two-day event "New Directions," another series of interdisciplinary performances about improvisation and expression across many forms of art.

While Garson received some backlash from the school, specifically for the stress he could have caused in putting "mandatory" in the email subject, the support for the dance show confirmed the effectiveness of his marketing strategy. Oliver Loeser '26 described how his motivation for coming to the show was driven by the desire to form bonds with others at the school.

"I know Josh [Garson] as a friend, but when I saw he sent an email to the whole [first year class], I knew it was imperative that I come support him not as a friend but as a member of the community," Loeser said.

Garson, after seeing the large crowd, reflected on his motivation for sending the email. "I was just really excited to announce my engagement with the Dance department," Garson said.

Many in the audience did not realize that the entire hour-long performance was improvised, with very little coordination between the six different dance classes before the show. The level of trust and coordination that developed throughout the performance was truly impressive. The show consisted of three acts, the first one being a combined improvisation with visual art in the background, musical instruments, loud breathing and humming, as well as sporadic movements from students around the stage, with others remaining in complete stillness.

Courtesy Photo
Many in the audience did not realize that the entire hour-long performance was improvised.

Two upperclassmen from a collaborative improvisation class, JT Titmus '23 and Chad Kim '23.5, discussed their involvement in the performance and what was powerful to them about using improvisation in the first act.

"Improvisation is kind of like jumping into a public pool," Kim started.

"Yeah, and sometimes you drown in your own self-doubt, but sometimes you have to swim and join the other fish," Titmus continued.

"Although it is mostly up to you to move and dance, there are forces beyond your control, like [professor] Matthew Taylor..." Kim joked in response.

The most interesting part of the second act, a dance routine with spontaneous moments for improved solo or duet dance, was the way that the four musicians improvised their music with each other. Guitarist Quinn Donaldson '26.5 from a first-year seminar dance class explained how there was a tremendous amount of communication and trust needed for the group to perform together, yet, at the same time, it was comfortable.

"We had to occasionally look each other in the eyes to indicate what direction we wanted to take the song, but we also felt really natural improvising together," Donaldson said.

Katie Loomis-Adams '26.5, the fiddle player in the show, also reflected on how part of the fun of improvisation is having some structure and understanding of an end goal while remaining completely adaptive.

"There was a sense to build up the intensity from the start, but also to add in changes in pace, mood and tempo throughout," Loomis-Adams said.

When Garson made a final reflection on the outcome of the night, he reminisced about the initial backlash, particularly from his RA, that he received for sending out the mass email, and hoped that the spectacular outcome of the show might have changed people's initial reservations.

"I still do not think that his response was fair, but hopefully my RA was in the audience tonight and changed his mind," Garson said.

There is no doubt that the experience of seeing people with little dance experience move so confidently and skillfully left serious impressions on many students who were drawn to the event by Garson's email. One such attendee was Dylan Palmer '26.

"I was genuinely inspired to get involved in the dance department after tonight," Palmer said.

BEYOND THE PAGE REMIMAGINES EDUCATION IN ALL DEPARTMENTS

By ELIZA KING FREEDMAN
Senior Arts & Culture Editor

Courtesy of Madison Middleton

Beyond the Page (BtP) is an innovative learning collective affiliated with the college.

Beyond the Page (BtP) is an innovative learning collective affiliated with the college that has completed one of its many on-campus residencies, which have evolved and broadened over the years since the last time The Campus visited them. The organization was born from a teaching practice that began close to 30 years ago at the Bread Loaf School of English, when the Bread Loaf Acting Ensemble began putting on a play at the end of the summer that spoke to what students had learned and discussed in the program that year. From there, the Ensemble began going into the classroom as teaching artists, encouraging students at the graduate school to engage with texts in new and more immersive ways.

Craig Maravich, current Director of BtP, was hired by Bread Loaf in 2010 to work with the Ensemble on cultivating this teaching practice. "It became really clear very quickly how important [BtP work] was, and how central it was, to how people learned at Breadloaf," Maravich said.

Since 2010, BtP has expanded to work with all of the college — from undergraduate classes, to affiliated programs in Monterey and elsewhere. Over these past two weeks, the organization entered political science, gender studies, theater and literature classes, working with specific texts in each one.

I had the opportunity to sit in on BtP's workshop in Associate Professor of Political Science Sebnem Gumuscu's Politics of the Middle East and North Africa class. Upon entering the class, before introducing the text, BtP instructors gathered the class in a circle and asked everyone to close their eyes and begin breathing in unison — a practice that BtP regularly uses to ground students at the start of their workshops.

After a lengthy warm-up, which Program Assistant Madison Middleton '22.5 later explained was inspired by theater warm-ups that encourage students to use their minds in new ways, the textual work began. Gumuscu's class had been discussing the Israel-Palestine conflict, and with that in mind BtP worked with a poem that Gumuscu had chosen specifically to offer a way for students to contextualize their feelings about the material they had been learning.

The day before my visit to the classroom, the BtP teaching artists had split students into groups of varying sizes and given each group different excerpts of the poem. The only instruction given was to be the loudest in the room — and what came, inevitably, was an exhausting performance of nonsensical yelling. During the class, however, students read the poem in unison, slowly, allowing them to reflect on the day before and see the poem in a new light.

After reading together, students were asked to underline words that resonated with them most and come up with phrases or synonyms that came to mind. Then, as they read together in an almost chant-like manner, students began adding their phrases to the chorus. "Vulnerability" and "hope for the future," were among the additions that were spoken into the poem, resulting in what students referred to as one of the most personal experiences in a political science class that they had ever had.

Beyond the Page is filling a unique role in the classroom of offering students avenues through which they can feel the material they are learning, even in disciplines which rarely ask students to include themselves in the narratives which they are studying.

"We are really interested in asking, how can we engage in the conflict in the world, large and small, in a creative way?" Middleton said.

Maravich took this idea one step further, reiterating the role that theater practices have in the classroom and pushing harder on BtP's entire notion that questions the way we learn in the day-to-day.

"When we bring a theater practice into the classroom, we can no longer solely hide behind an intellectual way of thinking, or that disembodied disconnection from the material," Maravich explained.

What was a practice that was met with visible resistance around the classroom, is a revolution of its own in the realm of education. BtP brings students into the material that they are learning. While it doesn't ask them to be actors themselves, it asks them to do what actors must do in their day jobs: to feel what they are reading or acting out as if it is happening to them. So many of the classes we take do the opposite of this, asking us to pause our feelings or our ability to empathize in order to absorb what is often tragic material. It makes BtP's disruption of the norm all the more jarring, but ultimately all the more valuable.

"When we create something as theater artists, that thing asks us to bring our whole selves — our whole imaginations, our whole sense of humor, our whole of what we value in the world, and you can't really hide behind it," Maravich reflected. "So when you suddenly infuse these practices in a space, it really invites people to bring their whole selves to the experience, such that it actually does matter how you feel about the material and what your opinions are — and to pretend that those things aren't a part of the mix, or don't need to be, is just false."

FROM THE ARCHIVES: THE HISTORY OF THE CORONATION AND ROYAL DRAMA

By TULIP LARSON
Arts & Culture Editor

May 6 will mark the first royal British coronation in 70 years with the crowning of Charles III; Queen Elizabeth II, who died this past September, was crowned on June 2, 1953. Due to Queen Elizabeth II's enduring reign, those of us who are not avid fans of "The Crown" may be unsure of what to expect from a coronation ceremony. Thankfully, "Long Live the Queen!", a pop-up book from 1953, provides us with the answers. Purchased by Middlebury Special Collections from a rare bookshop in Bath, UK, this veritable guide to the coronation ceremony follows the journey of two young children, John and Ann, who travel to London with their uncle to watch the crowning of Elizabeth II.

The book begins with a delicately painted pop-up of Buckingham Palace, which Ann and John learn was built for and named after the Duke of Buckingham. Each following page contains whimsical, hand-painted imagery of London's most venerated monuments, such as Whitehall, Big Ben and Trafalgar Square. At each monument, Ann and John learn coronation factoids such as the procession route, attendees and other traditions. Each page also educates the reader on key British history, Ann and John learn about everything from the defeat of Oliver Cromwell's army to the origins of the British flag as they meander through London's streets.

The book concludes as John and Ann watch Elizabeth's royal coach as it travels to Westminster Abbey, the sacred site of coronation. As the coach passes by, their uncle explains what will happen once the queen has reached the Abbey. First, "The Recognition" occurs, where the Queen stands before the congregation while the Archbishop proclaims her as the "heir to the crown." The Archbishop will then ask the congregation to voice their allegiance to the Queen to which they must shout their approval as loudly as possible. Next, the Queen will be anointed with holy oil and presented with finery before finally taking a seat in the Coronation Chair for her official crowning.

Ann and John listen in awe to their uncle's explanation, as they eagerly wait for the royal coach to return to Buckingham Palace laden with the freshly crowned Queen Elizabeth II. However, while the book espouses unabashed excitement and unity surrounding the coronation, the tone of King Charles' upcoming coronation is far from that.

Within the royal family, drama abounds over invitations to the royal ceremony. Prince Harry (King Charles' son), who has stoked tensions with his family through his recent memoir "Spare," only RSVP'd this past Saturday, despite being invited months ago. Speculation over his delayed response points to him being invited through email rather than physical invitation. And although Harry is grudgingly attending, his wife, Megan Markle, will stay in Los Angeles, which is unsurprising to many given the racism and disrespect she has endured from the royal family.

Another contentious invitation is that of Prince Andrew, Charles' younger brother, who was embroiled in the Jeffrey Epstein scandal and accused of sexual assault of a minor. These allegations forced Andrew to step back from his royal duties and have his title of " royal highness" revoked in 2019. Although Andrew has committed to attending the coronation, he has been barred from participating in the ceremony, which has reportedly left him "furious."

In other shocking news, President Biden has declined his invitation to the coronation and will be sending his wife in his stead. Because President Biden attended Queen Elizabeth's funeral but has not met with Charles since Elizabeth's death, this could suggest some tension between the two leaders.

This coronation has further caused a buzz as Charles may be the first-ever monarch to be publicly anointed. The most sacred aspect of the coronation occurs when the Archbishop of Canterbury anoints the monarch with holy oil, a practice that has never been seen by the public, as the monarch traditionally enters a private canopy for this portion of the ceremony. Although there has been no official word from Buckingham Palace as to whether Charles' anointment will be private or not, he has officially requested a canopy with a see-through top for this part of the coronation, hinting that the public may be privy to his anointing.

Finally, controversy over the continued existence of a monarch has intensified in recent months with Charles suffering multiple public "eggings." Anti-monarchist sentiment is likely to crescendo during the coronation, with demonstration groups already announcing plans for peaceful protests in Parliament Square during the coronation.

Evidently, much has changed since John and Ann watched Queen Elizabeth II pass by in her royal coach. A slew of factors have tainted the quaint excitement captured in "Long Live the Queen!" However, because of its dated nature, this pop-up book offers a lens into the psyche of the British citizenry, acting as a conduit to a simpler time, one filled with rich watercolor and impressive pop-ups.

Courtesy of Middlebury Special Collections

Men's lacrosse dominates on senior night against Colby

By GAVIN THOMSEN
Conrtibuting Writer

Courtesy of Will Costello

William Munroe '25 carries the ball in the lacrosse team's 18–15 win over Babson.

Twelve Panthers celebrated the last home regular season NESCAC contest of their Middlebury careers on Youngman Field this past Saturday. On senior day, the men's lacrosse team (12–1) continued their dominance this season with a resounding 22–12 win over Colby College (2–9).

The team honored their seniors ahead of Saturday's game. In the game, Middlebury took a lead early and did not look back — the Panthers scored four goals early in the first quarter. Colby tried to bounce back, but the Panthers' depth, stout defense and a run of nine unanswered goals in the third quarter proved to be too much for the visiting Mules.

Billy Curtis '25, who had two goals and three assists in the game; Russell Thorndike '25, who had two goals and two assists; Logan White '26, who also had two goals and two assists; and Patrick Jamin '25, who had one goal and three assists, led a Middlebury committee of 16 different goal-scorers. Saturday's outing demonstrated the Panthers' scoring ability, a primary reason why the team has been so successful this spring.

In the game, Middlebury took a lead early and did not look back — the Panthers scored four goals early in the first quarter.

While their high powered offense was certainly a bright spot, Middlebury's defense, led by Luke Simpson '23.5, Teddy Curran '24 and Billy Dobensky '23, stymied each Colby attempt at reasserting themselves in the game. Goalie Hayden Kern '26, who has been a great asset for the Panthers all year, was up to the test against a solid Colby offense. He racked up 10 saves through three quarters, and Finn O'Connor '23.5, in relief, earned five saves in the fourth quarter.

Though Middlebury's regular season is winding down, the Panthers still have a tough upcoming schedule ahead of playoffs.

"Both Amherst and Williams are great opponents, so we have to come in strong," Thorndike said. "It's a toss up in both of these games. We've been playing well, and I think we can take advantage of these opportunities, so hopefully we'll end the season at least at number two in the NESCAC."

After Saturday's dominant win, Middlebury sits at fifth place in the Division III national rankings and second place in the NESCAC rankings. The win pushes the Panthers to 7–1 in NESCAC play for the season, with their only loss coming against Tufts, who is currently ranked first in the country for Division III, according to Nike/USA Lacrosse. The NESCAC tournament begins April 29, and, in current standing, the Panthers will host their first round matchup.

Though Middlebury's regular season is winding down, the Panthers still have a tough upcoming schedule ahead of playoffs.

The Panthers welcomed Babson to Youngman Field on Sunday, April 16, for their last home contest of the 2023 regular season and prevailed 18–15.

George Madison '26 captures Middlebury Athletics through video highlights

By JACK McGUIRE
Senior Sports Editor

At Middlebury sporting events, fans can expect to see a typical cast of characters standing on the sidelines: coaches, bench players and referees. However this past year, a new figure has appeared on the edges of many Middlebury sports games: George Madison '26.

Since enrolling at Middlebury in the fall, Madison has been filming the practices and games of many Middlebury sports teams. He has then edited and posted the footage on his Instagram account @gmadvisuals in the form of highlight tapes and videos to increase excitement around college athletics. Madison has since collaborated with the Athletics Department, and many sports teams at Middlebury feature his work on their social media pages.

Madison's experience with sports photography dates back to his time before Middlebury. When he was younger, Madison had a general interest in cameras and photography, but he did not really get involved in sports photography until his senior year of high school.

"I randomly decided to take some photos of our high school basketball game one day, and then they ended up paying me to shoot for them all winter," Madison said. "From there I started doing more teams and sports and just kept growing."

When Madison got to Middlebury, he continued to shoot photos and videos that he posted on his personal Instagram. Madison's content caught the eye of Middlebury soccer player and fellow photographer Jordan Saint-Louis '24, who put Madison in touch with the soccer coaches, leading Madison to make official content for the team.

"They were the first team to hire me and give me the opportunity to shoot content at practices and games, so I am grateful for that," Madison said.

Since Madison's early work with the soccer team, he has gotten other opportunities to make content for specific teams and the Athletics Department as a whole. Madison says that cross country and basketball are his two favorite sports to create content for, but he likes the challenge of covering a wide variety of sports.

In addition to making videos for Middlebury athletics, Madison is also a member of the men's track and field team and the men's cross country team. For Madison, balancing academic work and being on a sports team is challenging enough, but creating content has given him even more to balance in his first year.

Creating the videos is not as simple as just going to the games and pressing play on the camera, Madison explained. Madison spends time on editing, color grading, sound design and file organization. Despite all these responsibilities, Madison has felt comfortable with how he has allocated his time.

"I find that it's worth the extra work though since this is what I want to do in the future," he said.

Madison has personal goals with his page. He wants to use the content he creates at Middlebury to attract larger clients, but he also hopes that his content can bring more attention to Middlebury athletics.

"I want to provide high quality content to the teams and individuals I work with," Madison said. "As an athlete, I know how cool it is to have some high quality content, and I want to provide that feeling to others."

Courtesy of George Madison

Madison with his camera.

Seven Questions with Derek Ban '24, men's golf

Courtesy of Will Costello

Derek Ban '24 carefully lines up his swing at the Duke Nelson Invitational tournament.

By OWEN PARK
Sports Editor

Derek Ban '24 from Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. is competing in his third year on the men's golf team. In this installment of Seven Questions, Ban discusses his journey to collegiate athletics, the unique community of the golf team and his hopes for the future of the program.

Owen Park: How were you first introduced to golf?

Derek Ban: Through my dad. He plays casually and occasionally took me to the driving range to hit balls when I was a toddler. Growing up, golf wasn't the only sport I was interested in — I also played baseball and soccer. It wasn't until I was 12 that I decided to commit to golf as my main sport and began to play in tournaments. Outside of competitions, I began to practice seriously on my own time and continued to do so through junior high and high school.

OP: So what about golf made you decide to make it your main sport?

DB: The fact that it's a completely self-motivated sport. With team sports, you have to conform to a specific role and playing with others constantly pushes you to improve regardless of how you feel. With golf, all of that motivation has to come from you. It's entirely up to you when you practice, how much effort you want to put in, as well as the kind of athlete you become. The fact that your trajectory in golf is entirely self-determined was something that really spoke to me at the time.

OP: Did you always know that you wanted to play in college?

DB: Mostly. Once I became serious about golf, I always had the goal of playing in college in the back of my mind. It was a decision I gradually came to after having enough experience with the sport. During my freshman year of high school, I came to realize that competing at the collegiate level was an option for me. After that moment, I played with the intent of one day being recruited to play in college.

OP: What made you decide to compete at Middlebury?

DB: The balance of academics and athletics. I knew I wanted to go to a school that was academically rigorous and didn't force me to sacrifice my education for golf. Middlebury stood out to me because it offered an amazing golf and academic program. One good thing about golf recruiting is that your scores speak for themselves which makes it easier to stand out to coaches. I reached out to schools that I was interested in playing for, and Middlebury was one of my top schools that responded.

OP: Now that you have been playing on the team for some time, what would you say are your favorite parts about being on the team?

DB: I really like the culture that this team has built for itself on and off of the course. Whenever we train, each player always holds themselves accountable and constantly tries to improve their game. The small size of the team also means that everyone gets to know each other and becomes really close. People look out for one another and are genuinely invested in getting to know new recruits as well as building connections with current players. Having a small roster also means I always have a chance to compete and stand out among my teammates.

OP: Would you say that your coaches have been influential in creating this cohesive team culture?

DB: Definitely. Coach Beaney is an amazing leader and he is one of the main reasons we're able to consistently compete at such a high level. He holds everyone to a high standard and keeps us accountable wherever we go. Even though he doesn't specialize in golf, he knows how to consistently get the best out of each person on the team. I would say it is because of his leadership that we're able to stay compact as a team on and off the course and have our team culture at large.

OP: Looking to the future, what are some hopes and goals you have for the program?

DB: As a team, we're looking to win NESCACs as well as to improve overall. It's also Coach Beaney's final year, so we're trying to give him a good send-off. Moving forward, I'm not sure how the program will look without Coach Beaney, so I can't speak to any changes that might happen next season. Regardless, as a senior next year, I want to do what I can to make sure that we maintain the good parts of the program even after I'm gone.

PFL Weekly

By BLAISE SIEFER, ELI DIBARI, MARCO FENGLER, CAPTAIN RUDOLPH
Podcast Hosts

Katie Murphy '23, the women's Golf captain at Middlebury College, has shown her skills and dedication to the sport. This past weekend, Murphy shot two under par in her last round, a feat that helped Middlebury set two new team records.

In an interview with PFL Weekly, Murphy discusses her journey to the college and how she became interested in golf. She shares some of her interesting preseason workouts and rituals that have helped her achieve success on the golf course. Beyond golf, Murphy is also an avid runner and is currently training for a half marathon.

How much does Murphy know about setting records? Tune in to find out!

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